

WHEN GOD SAYS 'NO'

And Other Radio Addresses

by
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CHAPTER NINE

STORY OF A SQUIRREL

AND NOW, while we are being tossed about, with many a conflict, many a doubt, fightings within and fears without - while the dark clouds are a driftin' and the sound of war is riftin' the hearts of the whole world, let us think of the One, the Perfect One who shall someday - soon, perhaps, come swinging down from his glory throne, to catch us away . . .

My thoughts carry me back this morning to a beautiful blue-watered lake in Central Michigan, where on a brilliant morning in 1925, I was trolling about in my row-boat, listening for the sudden singing of my Shakespeare reel which would tell me that somewhere out there in the underwater world, a fish had struck - listening to the splashing of the waves against the prow, watching the rhythmic dip and toss of the white gulls overhead - I suppose there is no atmosphere in the world more peaceful than that.

Being towed along beside me, its strings tied to the oarlock, was a net, probably half filled with various kinds of fish. Suddenly I noticed, not more than ten yards away, a little wild creature of some sort, swimming: up and down, over the crest of the waves, down into the trough, making almost no headway. I was probably a half mile from shore, and I wondered what a squirrel was doing out there in this - to him - strange environment-, for it was a beautiful red squirrel, exhausted, sniffing, struggling against the waves.

My first thought was - perhaps because I remembered my boyhood days on the farm, when we had had many a meal with squirrel as the chief meat dish, my first thought was to kill the squirrel and take it home for dinner.

I released one of the oars from its lock, raised it, made a wide sweep in the air - and then suddenly, smitten with pity, I stopped. I dropped the oar back into its place. The squirrel was swimming desperately straight for my boat.

Fascinated, watching her struggle - over the crest, down into the trough, which must have seemed terrifying to the weary little friend, I waited.

In a minute then, she swam up alongside, crawled across the trailing net, clambered up over the edge of the molding of the side, and, shivering, panting for breath yet and probably feeling very cold, she crouched in the seat in front of me, not making a move-.

I don't know now what my thoughts were as I rowed across the lake, to the cottage which was our temporary home, but it was a strange ride - just the two of us. All the way across, my little squirrel shivered, and trembled with fright, and, I think, with absolute exhaustion. No doubt it had been trying to get across from a bit of wooded shoreline about a mile away, to our own shore.

It was afterward that the Spirit of GOD showed me the experience as a beautiful illustration of the grace of the Lord JESUS CHRIST in bringing us to GOD. Afterward I remembered the words of the Apostle Peter, who in the third Chapter of his first letter, the 18th verse, says, "**For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh . . .**"

THAT HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD. BRING!

By and by as we rowed along, and all the time the little squirrel, crouching, shivering, trembling, sniffing - almost like a frightened child sobbing - by and by, the prow of my row boat scraped against the sand of the beach, Not until then, did my passenger show any inclination to move. And then, she turned, crawled along the edge of the molding of the side, over the gunwale, and out onto the shore. There was a tree - there, an oak, if I remember aright. And in a moment, lady red squirrel was on her way up. In a flash later she was perched on the first limb, still afraid, still exhausted, unmoving but in her natural habitat.

And, my friends, I like to think of what CHRIST has done for me - what He would like to do for every weary, struggling swimmer in the waves of life.

You - out there being tossed about, with many a conflict, many a doubt. That is not the habitat GOD has planned for you. He made you for the heights. He made you for the shore - (In the sweet by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore). HE, the mighty Oarsman, is rowing your way, sinner friend.

You, in your own strength can never make Heaven, never reach the land that is fairer than day. But He is rowing by. He is there now, waiting to take you on board.

Perhaps you are lonely to-day. You are far from friends and loved ones. Why. not give up the struggle, quit trying to master yourself! Give up the worrying, give up the struggle to win salvation by good works, and Let HIM BRING YOU TO GOD

- That's why he once suffered for our sins (That is penal)
- The just for the Unjust (That is substitution) and
- that He might bring us to God - (That is reconciliation).

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT,
COMIN' FOR TO CARRY ME HOME.

Let Him be your companion, let him take away the loneliness of your heart

"How can I be lonely,
when I've JESUS Only?"

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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